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National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs



Funded by the Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students (OELA) of the U.S. Department of Education

[Home](#) | 
 [About Us](#) | 
 [Resources About](#) | 
 [Numbers & Stats](#) | 
 [Practice](#) | 
 [Policy](#) | 
 [Ask An Expert](#)  
[AskNCELA](#)

[NCELA Frequently Asked Questions](#)  
[U.S. Department of Education](#)  
[Initiatives & Priorities](#)  
[Quick Links](#)  
[Print This Page](#)

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## NCELA FAQ

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### Q: How has the English language learner (ELL) population changed in recent years?

A: Between 1989-1990 and 2005-2006, ELL enrollment has more than doubled, from 2,030,451 students to 5,074,572.

Revised September 2008.

Prior to the 2001 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA), state education agencies (SEAs) in states receiving Title VII grants from the U.S. Department of Education were required to respond to an annual survey regarding the number of ELLs enrolled in elementary and secondary schools. According to these data and state-reported data for the most recent year, the number of ELL students in U.S. schools has more than doubled over the past fifteen years. Moreover, within the same time frame, ELL enrollment has increased at nearly seven times the rate of total student enrollment. The table and figure below show the estimated year-by-year increases in total enrollment and ELL enrollment.

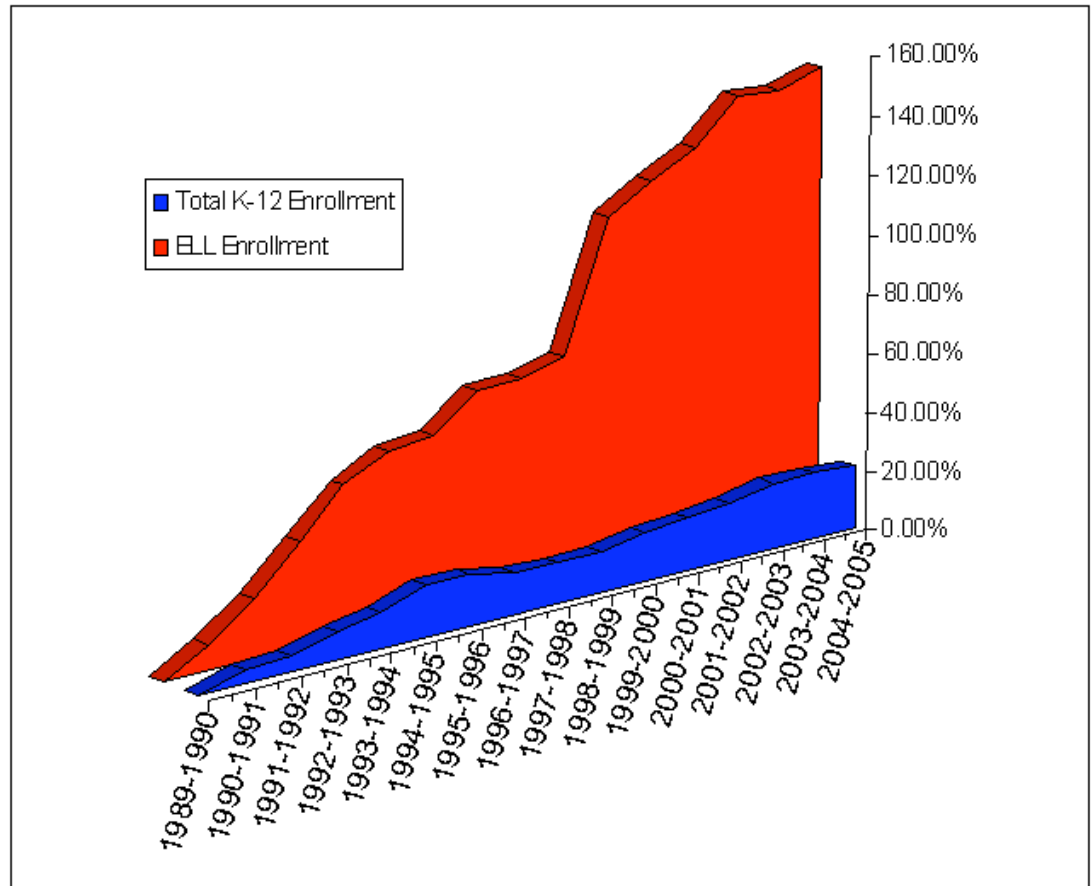
### Elementary and Secondary Enrollment of ELL Students in U.S. 1989-90 to 2005-2006

School Year	Total Enrollment	Growth from 1998-99	Growth from 1993-94	Growth from 1989-90	ELL Enrollment	Growth from 1998-99	Growth from 1993-94	Growth from 1989-90
<b>1989-1990</b>	40,608,842			--	2,030,451			--
<b>1990-1991</b>	42,553,764			4.8%	2,198,778			8.3%
<b>1991-1992</b>	42,790,993			5.4%	2,429,815			19.7%
<b>1992-1993</b>	44,444,939			9.4%	2,735,952			34.7%
<b>1993-1994</b>	45,443,389		--	11.9%	3,037,922		--	49.6%
<b>1994-1995</b>	47,745,835		5.1%	17.6%	3,184,696 <sup>1</sup>		4.8%	56.9%
<b>1995-1996</b>	47,582,665		4.7%	17.2%	3,228,799		6.3%	59.0%
<b>1996-1997</b>	46,375,422		2.8%	15.0%	3,452,073		13.6%	70.0%
<b>1997-1998</b>	46,023,969		1.3%	13.3%	3,470,268		14.2%	70.9%
<b>1998-1999</b>	46,153,266	--	1.6%	13.7%	3,540,673	--	16.5%	74.4%

<b>1999-2000</b>	47,356,089	2.6%	4.2%	16.6%	4,416,580	24.7%	45.4%	117.5%
<b>2000-2001</b>	47,665,483	3.3%	4.9%	17.4%	4,584,947	29.5%	50.9%	125.8%
<b>2001-2002</b>	48,296,777	4.6%	6.3%	18.9%	4,750,920	34.2%	56.4%	134.0%
<b>2002-2003</b>	49,478,583	7.2%	8.9%	21.8%	5,044,361	42.5%	66.0%	148.4%
<b>2003-2004</b>	49,619,090	7.5%	9.1%	22.2%	5,013,539	41.6%	65.0%	146.9%
<b>2004-2005</b>	<b>48,982,898</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	<b>20.6%</b>	<b>5,119,561</b>	<b>44.6%</b>	<b>68.5%</b>	<b>152.1%</b>

<sup>1</sup>This figure is from the Survey of the States' Limited English Proficient Students and Available Education Programs and Services 1994-1995. It does not include ELL enrollment for Virginia, West Virginia, Guam, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, and the Northern Marianas Islands.

### Relative Growth in ELL and Total Enrollment in U.S. Schools, 1989-90 to 2005-2006



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education's survey of the states' limited English proficient students and available educational programs and services, 1991-92 through 2001-2002 summary reports. Supplemented by state publications (1998-99 data), enrollment totals from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2004-2006 Consolidated State Performance Reports, and data reported by states.

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**NCELA**

The George Washington University  
Graduate School of Education and Human Development  
2011 Eye St. NW • Suite 300 • Washington, DC • 20006

EMAIL: [askncela@gwu.edu](mailto:askncela@gwu.edu)

PHONE: (202) 467-0867 • (800) 321-6223

FAX: (202) 467-4283 • (800) 531-9347

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